

REMARKS

By the present amendment, Applicant has amended Claim 1, cancelled Claims 2, 3 and 9, and added Claims 10 and 11. Claims 1, 4-8, 10 and 11 remain pending in the present application. Claims 1, 10 and 11 are independent claims.

The Examiner rejected Claims 1 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b), as being anticipated by Komiya et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,318,063) Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Komiya et al. in view of Blasé (U.S. Patent No. 6,612,104). The Examiner indicated that Claims 2, 3, and 6-9 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and of any intervening claims.

The Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter is noted with appreciation. In this regard, Applicant has amended independent Claim 1 to include the allowable subject matter of Claim 2. Also, allowable Claims 3 and 9 have been rewritten in independent form as new Claims 10 and 11, respectively. For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that amended independent Claim 1 and its corresponding dependent claims, and independent Claims 10 and 11 are allowable over the prior art applied of record. A Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

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For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. If such is not the case, the Examiner is requested to kindly contact the undersigned in an effort to satisfactorily conclude the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Dolph H. Torrence". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and contact information.

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